

# SMARTFLYER

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## Trend Report, Straight from the Fashion Week of Travel



Each year, our tribe gathers in Las Vegas for Virtuoso Travel Week, otherwise known as the ‘Fashion Week of Travel.’ While there’s no runway – aside from the one at LAS, that is – in sight, it’s the primary annual event that brings together the travel industry’s top agents to meet with the luxury hotels, cruise lines and ground operators that make the magic happen for our clients.

We rounded up some of our top takeaways from the back-to-back meetings our Smarties had highlighting the innovative experiences accompanying the top-notch amenities Virtuoso is known to provide guests. From sustainable infrastructure on the edge of Volcanoes National Park to landing in the middle of the Great Barrier Reef by private helicopter to the chance to adopt a pup as a lifelong souvenir, the latest trends in travel will leave a lasting impact.

## 1 MORE TENTED CAMPS POPPING UP BEYOND AFRICA

The ‘glamping’ concept extends far beyond safari with new tented options emerging in the U.S., Central America and Europe. NYC-based advisor [Liana Merriman](#) shares, “Nayara Springs is debuting its own tented camp in the Arenal region of Costa Rica this year. These luxury air-conditioned tents feature a signature plunge pool with water supplied by the natural hot springs, plus an outdoor shower and oversized tub. It’s no ordinary camping adventure, especially thanks to the views of Arenal Volcano!” | [Book Here](#) >>



Chicago-based travel agent **Kelly Smith** adds, “**Glenapp Castle** in Scotland is also offering this as a special experience! They’ll take you on a ‘sea safari’ to a remote island off the coast surrounded by water and dramatic cliffs. The Glenapp team will set up a private luxury glamping tent complete with a chef! It looks like such a fun and unique experience; I can’t wait to book it for my clients.” | [Book Here >>](#)

## 2 SUSTAINABILITY AS MORE THAN JUST A BUZZWORD

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Far beyond simply eliminating straws, sustainable travel is a trend that’s only continuing to be reinforced by leading hotel brands. Manhattan-based advisor **Brianna Feo** shares, “Hotels and resorts are not only putting an emphasis on locally-sourced food and finding alternatives for plastic, but they are looking to reduce guests’ overall carbon footprint. Specifically, the newly opened **Singita Kwitonda Lodge** in Rwanda was designed as a zero-trace lodge with a design following the natural contours of the ground and water systems that fuel the facilities. This attention-to-detail makes for an even more memorable place to call ‘home’ when gorilla trekking through Volcanoes National Park.”



But sustainability doesn't stay on shore alone; **Quark Expeditions** – a leader in Polar adventures – offers an eco-conscious way for guests to explore Antarctica or the Arctic in small, intimate groups. Atlanta-based travel advisor **Alison White** shares, “One thing that really stood out to me at Virtuoso Travel Week was Quark’s vessels burn Marine Gas Oil (MGO) a clean burning fuel with a low emission factor. Guests love knowing that when visiting this fragile part of the ecosystem, their impact isn’t taken lightly. Instead, they are able to really focus on enjoying the awe-inspiring moments like polar bear spotting and seeing the Northern Lights.”

## 3 WELLNESS, BUT WITH A TWIST

It's nothing new that travelers are seeking amenities aligned with their lifestyles at home; but, it goes so much deeper than a well-equip gym. Dallas-based agent **Courtney Beaver** divulges, “The modern guest is looking for experiences that support well-being, even if it's simply to balance out the ‘damage’ they did the night prior. **Equinox Hotel** in Hudson Yards stands out as a fantastic new option in New York for the traveler that wants not only access to the members-only fitness club, but add-ons like in-room IV vitamin drips, cryotherapy or even quantum harmonics. Plus, the technology in the 212 rooms and suites promise the best night of sleep of your life!” | [Book Here >>](#)





Over on the west coast, wellness has long been woven into the fabric of daily life. But a fine tune never hurt, which was the impetus for the collaboration between **The Ranch at Malibu** and **Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village**. Atlanta-based travel advisor **Monica Maslia** divulges, “The Ranch 4.0 wellness program is one of the most unique programs I’ve ever seen. With a stay at the iconic Four Seasons, you get the benefit of The Ranch at Malibu’s approach to a weekend detox.” NJ-based **Abby Kastin** adds, “Guests have an all-inclusive experience that goes beyond a gym to include hiking in the Santa Monica Mountains, group fitness glasses held outdoors and meals enjoyed communally in an enchanting greenhouse.” | [Book Here >>](#)

# 4

## JAMES BOND-ESQUE ARRIVALS BY AIR + SEA

While the idea of a helicopter or boat transfer is nothing new, some of our Virtuoso partners are really upping the ante with unique approaches to guests’ transfers from the airport to their property. NYC-based travel advisor **Barrett Hollo** shares, “Just this summer, **qualia** – a stunning private island option in Australia – built a brand-new lounge right by Heart Island in the Great Barrier Reef. They land the heli directly on the roof of the lounge and from here, clients have a truly luxurious experience in the center of the world’s largest coral reef system. Guests are invited to relax in style on the spectacular Heart Island Pontoon, which features an incredible mirrored exterior, luxury fittings and a breathtaking outlook over the Great Barrier Reef.” | [Book Here >>](#)



Looking to settle into your hotel record time? Our friends at **Shangri-La Toyko** can help! They offer guests a private high speed boat directly from Haneda Airport for the ultimate James Bond arrival. With such a speedy arrival, guests will be able to jump right into the unique experiences that the property has in store, like the special “sushi nails” at Chi Spa that you’ve probably seen all over Instagram! In a place like Japan, we love the idea of not only saving time but doing it in style.

# 5

## CULTURAL MOMENTS DRIVING DESTINATION CHOICES

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It’s no secret that cuisine (and Instagram-worthy dining, at that!) is a big factor when deciding where our clients will visit next. So, we loved learning about all the unique culinary experiences our partners are crafting! For instance, Tampa-based agent **Lesley Cohen** shares, “**The Westbury** in Dublin offers such visually appealing food and beverage options that aren’t just pretty, but delicious. As they say, ‘phone eats first’ when you’re here, because you can’t help but snap a shot of their artisanal cocktails and entrees.” Newport Beach-based advisor **Lauren Kimball Grubbs** adds, “Speaking of Insta, **The Balmoral**, a **Rocco Forte Hotel** in Edinburgh offers a walking tour through the city where they’ll show guests where to take the most Instagram-worthy photos. Beyond the fun shots you’ll get, it’s a perfect way to get acquainted with the city.” | [Book Here >>](#)



Adding to the notion of cultural moments playing a part in destination demand, film plays a role in creating interest around destination. Dallas-based advisor **Carly Davis** shares, “There’s been a surge in itineraries based around Singapore because of the movie, ‘Crazy Rich Asians.’ The destination management companies SmartFlyer partners with can do street food tours that highlight some of the best the city has to offer, including the Michelin-starred hawker stands, just like in the movie. After having a ‘Singapore Sling’ at the iconic grand dame, **Raffles Hotel Singapore**, take a tour of the botanical gardens that highlights some of the rarest flowers in the world to feel like you’re right in the film.”

# 6

## HOTEL PETS, FOR WHEN YOUR FURRY FRIENDS AT HOME

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For the animal lovers out there, the good news is that you don’t have to feel alone when on the road! While plenty of our favorite hotels have been known to slip a cute framed photo of our furry friends as an in-room welcome amenity, some properties are going further, housing resident animals for guests to interact with during their stay. Austin-based travel advisor **Amanda Poses** shares, “In Paris, **Le Bristol** has a Burmese cat named Fa-Raon. He majestically embodies the spirit of the palace where he has his own private apartment decorated by the graffiti artist Renk and can usually be found on the concierge’s desk, the lobby chairs or among the garden paths.” She goes on to say, “Then, there’s the resident miniature pony at **Salamander Resort & Spa** named ‘Cupcake’ who joins guests in the living room to say hello!” | [Book Here >>](#)





At the **DOUGLAS**, an **Autograph Collection** in Vancouver, guests are welcomed by Wrench, an adorable Frenchie. He makes for the perfect companion while enjoying your Virtuoso welcome amenity, a bespoke gin created exclusively for the hotel. And finally, back on the East Coast, **Inn by the Sea** in Maine works closely with a dog rescue and gives guests the opportunity to walk, play and feed them while on property. NYC-based agent **Nicole Gerber** shares, “During our visit this summer, my son was obsessed with walking the pups! And while he didn’t quite convince me to adopt a dog before we departed, we witnessed a fellow guest adopting one of the puppies which was so heartwarming. Close to 200 dogs have been adopted through this program!” | [Book Here >>](#)

## LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

WE'D BE REMISS NOT TO RECOGNIZE THE “BEST OF THE BEST” AWARD WINNERS.



01. **Hotel of the Year:** Four Seasons Hotel V ([see more](#))
02. **Best Dining Experience:** Restaurant Le Gabriel of La Réserve Paris Hotel and Spa ([see more](#))
03. **Best Bar:** Le Sirenuse Champagne Bar of the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club ([see more](#))
04. **Best Design Achievement:** Rosewood Hong Kong ([see more](#))
05. **Best Family Program:** Grand Velas Riviera Maya
06. **Best Wellness Program:** Miraval Arizona Resort and Spa
07. **Best Sustainable Tourism Leadership:** Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley ([see more](#))